

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4 and 7-36 are pending in the application with claims 1 and 4 being independent. Claims 1 and 4 have been amended, claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 have been canceled, and new claims 33-36 have been added.

In response to the Examiner's comments, the title has been amended to better describe the invention and the drawings have been amended to include the legend "Prior Art." No new matter has been added.

Claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 have been cancelled in view of the rejections under section 112, second paragraph and section 101. Claims 33-36 have been added for the purpose of claiming the subject matter that claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 were intended to cover. Applicant believes that claims 33-36 are in proper form and are not indefinite.

Claims 1 and 26 have been rejected as being anticipated by Kitamura and claims 1 and 4 have been rejected as being anticipated by Fujieda. As amended, each of claims 1 and 4 recites an optical fiber plate that includes an optical fiber that itself includes a core, a clad provided over the core, and an absorbing layer provided over the clad. Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections because neither Kitamura nor Fujieda describes or suggests an absorbing layer provided over a clad.

Dependent claims 25 and 27-32 have been rejected as being obvious over Kitamura in view of applicant's admitted prior art (claims 27 and 28); Fujieda in view of applicant's admitted prior art (claims 27, 28, 31 and 32); Fujieda in view of Kitamura (claims 26 and 30); and Kitamura or Fujieda in view of Ratnaker (claims 25 and 29). Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections because neither the admitted prior nor Ratnaker remedies the failure of Kitamura and Fujieda to describe or suggest the subject matter of the independent claims.